

# STATE STRUCTURE

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is the administrative arm of the State Board of Education. It works with educators, legislators, government agencies, and citizens of the state to maintain a strong public education system in the state. Through its statewide school improvement initiatives and regulatory functions, DESE strives to assure that all citizens have access to high quality public education. The scope of DESE's duties range from early childhood to adult education services. The Department does not regulate or evaluate private/parochial or home schools.

The Commissioner of Education directs the staff of DESE and fulfills other duties as prescribed by law. These duties include directing the process by which school districts are accredited, assuring efficient management of the 524 public school districts and seeking to elevate the standards and efficiency of the instruction given in the public schools in the state. The senior staff of DESE includes the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, the Associate Commissioner, and five Assistant Commissioners.

The Associate Commissioner and five Assistant Commissioners each lead one of the DESE's six divisions:

1. The Associate Commissioner for the Administrative and Financial Services Division

Division is responsible for distributing funds to local school districts and other eligible public agencies.

The School Finance Section:

- Assists local districts with budgeting, audits and the reporting of financial statistics
- Administers the federally funded breakfast and school lunch programs
- Administers the federally funded pupil transportation program
- Oversees the department's internal business operations, such as budget, accounting, information technology and human resources

2. The Assistant Commissioner for the Division of School Improvement

Division manages the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP), the state's accreditation system for public school districts. It assists local educators with curriculum development and the state's assessment program, the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP).

The Curriculum Services Section:

This section provides technical assistance to local school personnel in the following content areas:

- Mathematics
- Communication Arts
- Science
- Social Studies
- Health/Physical Education
- Fine Arts

This section administers a number of state and federally funded programs that assist local schools which include:

- Title I and other federally funded programs
- Early Childhood and Parent Education (Parents as Teachers (PAT))
- Charter Schools
- Gifted Education
- Educational Technology
- State funded A+ high school program

#### The Core Data Section:

This section oversees the collection and reporting of educationally related statistics.

### 3. The Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Special Education

Supervises two Coordinators for Special Education; three Superintendents, one for each of the State Board of Education operated school systems; the Director of the Sheltered Workshop Program; and the Division's legal counsel.

#### The Division of Special Education

Division is responsible for the following:

- General supervision and implementation of state and federal regulations for special education and early intervention services
- General supervision of all public agencies that provide early intervention and special education services to children with disabilities ages' birth to 21
- Distribution of all state and federal funds to support these services
- General supervision requirements required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Administration, technical support, and distribution of state funds to the ninety-three workshops located throughout the state for adults for whom sheltered employment is necessary

The Division of Special Education also oversees three school systems administered by the State Board of Education:

- The Missouri School for the Blind (MSB) located in St. Louis
- The Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD) in Fulton
- The State Schools for Severely Handicapped (SSSH), which include thirty-seven day schools located across the state.

Personnel in this division assist local school districts and early intervention providers to improve outcomes and results for children with disabilities.

In order to meet the state and federal regulations governing the provision of special education and early intervention services to Missouri's infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities, the Division of Special Education is organized into four functional sections.

#### The Funds Management Section:

This section is responsible for the distribution of all state and federal funds to eligible public agencies for both Parts B and C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In addition to funds distribution, this section:

- Works with the State Medicaid agency to facilitate eligible administrative and direct service claims under Title XIX for children with disabilities
- Assists other division sections in executing all contracts for services needed by the division. This is an especially important role for the Part C program in Missouri

#### The Data Coordination Section:

- Provides technical support and data collection functions for both Part B and C of the IDEA
- Collects and submits all data required under the IDEA
- Coordinates data collections, definitions and other requirements with the Core Data Section of the Division of School Improvement
- Compiles and distributes the annual performance profile on children with disabilities in each school district in Missouri. This annual profile informs each district on the district's prior year's performance on the State Performance Goals for children between the ages of 3 and 21.

The Coordinator for Administrative Services supervises the sections of Funds Management and Data Coordination.

#### The Effective Practices Section:

This section is responsible for implementing the requirements of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development as required by IDEA and assuring an adequate supply of qualified personnel for both Parts B and C. In addition, this section:

- Works with the Division of Teacher Quality and Urban Education to establish competencies for Missouri educators
- Provides funding to support tuition reimbursement through the Division's State Improvement Grant (SIG)
- Works with the area Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDC) by contracting for a special education staff person at each of the nine RPDC centers
- Certifies trainers in special education curricula (such as differentiated instruction, positive behavior supports) that are available in each of the RPDC regions
- Works closely with several initiatives in the Division of School Improvement, namely, Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) to assure the participation of all children with disabilities in the state assessment system, with the Reading and Math Initiatives, promoting the inclusion of special education teachers in these professional development opportunities, and that needs of children with disabilities are considered

This section is responsible for the development of all required curricula for this credentialing system, which requires completion of approximately eight days in training

#### The Compliance Section:

This section manages all of the general supervision requirements for both Parts C and B of IDEA, which include:

- Monitoring of all responsible agencies
- Investigating child complaints
- Assigning education surrogates
- Coordinating due process and mediation requests
- Responding to technical assistance requests

This section conducts monitoring of public schools on a five-year cycle with the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP), which is housed in the Division of School Improvement.

Approximately 100 districts are monitored each year. The section monitors all charter schools and other responsible public agencies (Department of Corrections (DOH), etc.) on a five-year cycle

For Part C, with the implementation of the Central Finance Office (CFO) and the data system that it provides, a number of compliance requirements will be monitored on a continuous basis through review of CFO reports. When review of these reports indicates potential compliance concerns, an immediate contact will be made with the System Point of Entry (SPOE) to investigate the issue. Regular on-site reviews will also be scheduled with each SPOE. Prior to an on-site review, the data reports will be analyzed, and information from System Satisfaction Surveys and other public inputs will be reviewed.

The Coordinator for Special Education Services supervises the sections of Compliance and Effective Practices.

4. The Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Teacher Quality and Urban Education

This Division is responsible for the evaluation of teacher training programs offered by Missouri's higher education institutions and for issuing of certificates (licenses) to all professional educators who work in the state's public school system. Division personnel also:

- Administer the Leadership Academy, a professional development experience for Missouri's public school principals and superintendents and other professional development programs created through the 1993 reform legislation known as the Outstanding Schools Act (OSA).
- Provide leadership and coordination for nine Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDC), (also created by the OSA), which are charged with providing professional development to Missouri educators.
- Administer the state's career ladder program, tuition reimbursement and scholarship programs

5. The Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Vocational and Adult Education

This Division is responsible for a wide range of programs that serve the vocational and technical training needs of high school students, postsecondary students, adults and industry. The Division provides:

- Professional leadership and administers state and federal funds to support occupational training services in high schools, area vocational technical schools and community colleges.
- Provides individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to prepare them for employment in current and emerging fields, to continue their education or to be retrained for new business and industry practices.
- Administers statewide adult education services, including adult education and literacy and the high school equivalency-testing program and workforce development

6. The Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

This Division is responsible for the specialized services to adult citizens with disabilities to help clients achieve employment and independence. The Division:

- Maintains offices across the state to provide convenient services to clients.
- Personnel provide counseling, training and other services to help clients achieve gainful employment or independent living
- Currently funds 21 Independent Living Centers across the state, which provides counseling advocacy, personal care and training in independent living skills for adults with disabilities
- Employs staff for the Disability Determinations offices across the state who determine eligibility for disability benefits under the Social Security Act
- Assists individuals with claims for disability benefits